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## International child development centre: progress report and proposed activities for 2000–2002

*Summary*

In its first 10 years, the International Child Development Centre (ICDC), also known as the Innocenti Centre, has contributed significantly to strengthening UNICEF programmes and advocacy by enhancing the organization's capacity to research new areas and learn from its field experience. Its most significant contributions have been in the areas of socio-economic policy analysis and children's rights. Work carried out by the Centre has helped to underpin the ability of UNICEF to influence course corrections in global programmes of structural adjustment, debt and economic transition to market economies by demonstrating the crushing impact of fiscal measures on the poorest children. The Centre has also undertaken seminal work in increasing global understanding of the human rights of children and facilitating implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Now well established as a child rights information centre, ICDC continues to explore new areas and issues and to contribute to the UNICEF knowledge base on children's rights and economic and social policies for children. Much of its early work has been incorporated into the future agenda of UNICEF and mainstreamed into its current programme work.

As UNICEF enters the complexities of the new millennium, the Executive Director *recommends* that the Executive Board approve the extension of the Centre's work for the period 2000–2002 in order to strengthen UNICEF capacity to explore new dimensions of its future agenda and to document lessons learned from international experience. A total allocation of $12.8 million in supplementary funding is proposed, of which the Government of Italy has pledged 10.5 billion lire (approximately $6 million) for the Centre's core activities, with the remainder to be sought from other donors for specific activities.

* E/ICEF/1999/15.

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# I. Introduction

1. The International Child Development Centre (ICDC), also known as the Innocenti Centre, was established in Florence, Italy, in September 1988. Its mandate, as defined in "The organization of the United Nations Children's Fund", (E/ICEF/Organization/Rev.3 of 24 April 1998), is to strengthen the capacity of UNICEF and its cooperating institutions to respond to the evolving needs of children and to promote an emerging new global ethic for children. The Centre serves as an international knowledge base and training centre working for the effective implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child in both developing and industrialized countries. Principal activities include policy analysis, applied research, capacity-building and training initiatives.

2. The 1986 agreement between UNICEF and the Government of Italy, which provides most of the funding and covers the operational costs of the Centre, stipulates that the Director of the Centre be assisted on important policy matters relating to cooperation with the Government and the *Istituto degli Innocenti*, the host institution in Florence, by an International Advisory Committee chaired by the Executive Director of UNICEF. The most recent extension of this agreement in March 1999 allows the expansion of Committee membership to include representatives of other donors to the Centre and eminent international child development and human rights experts, thus allowing its work to benefit from a broader human rights and development perspective.

3. Since 1994, the Centre has presented triennial reports to the Executive Board outlining the basic objectives, strategies and programme priorities, as well as the financial and administrative arrangements for the Centre (E/ICEF/1994/L.9 and E/ICEF/1996/20). A brief stocktaking of the Centre's work and its contribution to UNICEF during its first decade of operation is provided in chapter II of the present report. It also reports on the current work being undertaken by the Centre. Chapter III proposes the future direction of the Centre, particularly during the next three-year cycle (2000–2002).

# II. Background and report on work during 1997–1999

## A. Background

4. In its first decade, the Centre has been a catalyst for the development of the leadership role of UNICEF on behalf of children in two key areas of the organization's work. It has informed and helped to shape the UNICEF human rights agenda for children and has contributed to intellectually underpinning the organization's advocacy for appropriate adjustment in economic and social policies for the poorest children and families. The Centre has made a seminal contribution to increasing international awareness and understanding of the Convention of the Rights of the Child. Since its inception, the Centre has served as the "engine" for research on the Convention and for the interpretation of its various articles and principles and their implications for the work of UNICEF, Governments, international organizations and other actors working on child rights issues. It has also served as an important forum for networking and dialogue as well as for the development of strategic approaches which could facilitate the fulfilment of children's rights. In addition, its economic and social policy analysis has allowed UNICEF to contribute to better international understanding of the role and impact of economic and social policies and forces on the lives of vulnerable children and families in a rapidly globalizing world. From its work on structural adjustment with a human face and debt, to the transition to market economies, the Centre's research has helped to fuel policy changes which benefit children and poor families.

5. Other areas of the Centre's pioneering work which have fundamentally influenced the direction and development of UNICEF policies and programmes include its early research and networking with experts and non-governmental actors in such child protection areas as child labour, the urban child, street children and the impact of war on children. Work in all of these areas is now mainstreamed in UNICEF programmes worldwide and is central to the organization's future agenda. The Centre's research and identification of best practices and strategies have helped to provide road maps for the current work of UNICEF. In addition, the Centre has helped to explore gender issues and such areas as the psychosocial development of the young child as well as the special needs and rights of disabled children. More recently, it has initiated work on the protection of migrant children, ethnic minorities and indigenous children, all of which are emerging as important areas of tension and concern in societies in both industrialized and developing countries.

6. This groundbreaking work needs to be set in the context of the rapidly changing international environment of the late 1980s and the preoccupation of UNICEF with child survival goals. In 1988, when ICDC was established, UNICEF was widely recognized as an effective organization which delivered significant programme results for children. But the economic turbulence buffeting developing countries, debt and international structural adjustment policies were all beginning to seriously erode the spectacular gains made in child survival and development (CSD). International concern was growing about the sustainability and extent of community ownership of these programmes. At the same time, new child protection issues were emerging, their poignancy drawing the spotlight of increased media attention and demanding urgent responses. UNICEF was also beginning to focus on the imminent nascence of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, which would inevitably widen its own role and responsibilities on behalf of poor, marginalized and disadvantaged children everywhere.

7. Based on its field experience, UNICEF began to work to protect the advances made in CSD by influencing the larger debate on the global international economic and social environment within which development assistance was delivered. In particular, it drew attention to the impact of debt and structural adjustment on the lives of the poorest children and women, bringing their perspective forcefully to the discussion. It advocated for social safety nets and adjustment with a human face. All of this brought home the need for UNICEF to strengthen its own knowledge base and to learn from its own field experience as well as that of other agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), many of which were more directly involved in working on aspects of the new child protection and child rights issues.

8. ICDC — free from the operational constraints of other parts of the organization — provided a place where these new issues could be studied and debated. It worked with leading international economists, social scientists, lawyers and other experts in international development and human rights to support the articulation of UNICEF advocacy positions and to consider strategies and approaches which would increase its programme efficacy.

9. Research on the impact of economic and social policies on children and families was aimed at facilitating policy reform by improving international and national understanding and access to relevant information, analysis and data. Senior staff at ICDC and elsewhere in UNICEF worked with leading experts on debt issues and on the impact of structural adjustment policies on the poor. In particular, they focused on sub-Saharan Africa, where the economic crisis had generated a fierce debate among analysts and policy makers concerning its causes and possible solutions. These initiatives injected new thinking into international discussions on structural adjustment and contributed to the questioning of accepted theories and prescriptions.

10. Similarly, the Centre's work on child poverty and deprivation in industrialized countries served to clarify the complex interaction of fiscal and social policies on the poor in more affluent communities. The economic transition in Central and Eastern Europe and in the former Soviet Union, which began some 10 years ago, spurred the Centre to focus on the dramatic impact of change on the region's children and vulnerable families. A programme of monitoring this impact under the *Regional Monitoring Reports* series (also known as the MONEE reports) was begun even before UNICEF established offices in the region and provide a powerful basis for advocacy for the development of social safety nets for children and other vulnerable groups. This programme continues today, as does the struggle of the countries of the Central and Eastern Europe, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Baltic States region to adapt to fundamental change. Together with the extensive and authoritative TransMONEE database which has been developed, the work of ICDC makes an increasingly significant contribution to UNICEF programmes in the region. It also informs and influences the work and resource allocations of major developmental and financial institutions such as the World Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), academic institutions and bilateral donors.

11. The other major event shaping the Centre's early work was the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child by the United Nations General Assembly in 1989. Together with the then Division of Public Affairs (DPA) at New York headquarters, ICDC played a key role within UNICEF in the development of advocacy and programme support for the Convention. While DPA worked on the process of universal ratification and political advocacy, the Centre explored the implications of the Convention for UNICEF work through research and policy analysis. It also hosted a UNICEF Steering Committee which met regularly in Florence to guide the organization on the implications of the Convention. In addition, research was conducted on the basic principles and articles of the Convention such as the best interest principle, non-discrimination and child participation, as well as on the compatibility and complementarity of international instruments such as the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the

Rights of the Child. The Centre also worked on resource mobilization for the fulfilment of children's rights in low-income countries, closer policy analysis of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, documentation of UNICEF field experiences and the design of a first framework for implementation strategies. An initial review of monitoring mechanisms documented the experience of the world's first ombudsperson for children.

12. As part of its early work, ICDC also began to examine emerging global concerns, such as the impact of rapid urbanization on poor children, a subject on which the Centre has built up considerable expertise. Databases were established, best practices and case studies documented, and networking and mobilization of mayors and city administrations undertaken in close cooperation with concerned field offices. Of particular note is the Centre's work on new child protection issues, two of which continue to be an important part of its ongoing work. These are (a) child labour and the link with education; and (b) the psychosocial effects of war on children and on their social reintegration. The situation of minorities and immigrant children was also researched, followed by advocacy for their rights. Some of the work on the situation of children in industrialized countries was undertaken in cooperation with the ICDC Italian host institution, the *Istituto degli Innocenti*. Other new areas included early childhood development and the right to health and to nutrition.

## B. Assessment of past work

13. Several reviews of the Centre's work have been undertaken in the past decade, including by a United Nations Research Institute for Social Change/Ford Foundation/UNICEF team in 1993 and by the 1994 UNICEF management study mandated by the Executive Board (E/ICEF/1994/13/Rev.1, decision 1994/R.1/6). All commended the high quality of ICDC research. For example, the 1993 assessment concluded that the Centre had established itself as a high-quality research and training institution from which UNICEF was already deriving significant benefits. Since then, the Centre has continued to do groundbreaking work which has helped to establish the basis for later UNICEF advocacy, policy and programme development. For example, *The State of the World's Children 1996* report on the impact of war on children and the 1997 report on child labour drew upon the Centre's work. ICDC also provides a forum for UNICEF to explore how best to pursue some of its ongoing work towards the achievement of major goals. To cite just two early examples, the 1991 Innocenti Declaration on breastfeeding helped to progress the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative, while the European Consultation, which the Centre organized as part of the Graça Machel study, fed into the organization's Anti-War Agenda. Current work on juvenile justice, inter-country adoption of children and child trafficking is helping to inform the work of those offices which are beginning to grapple with such issues on a serious basis.

14. The reviews also noted the need for the Centre to strengthen its work in some important areas. These included improvement in the Centre's ability to transfer more systematically all of its research findings directly into UNICEF policy-making, programme development, advocacy and staff training. The reviews also called for the Centre to ensure broader public and political awareness and visibility for the research findings. These were serious challenges for any research institution given that (a) action-oriented organizations often lack sufficient time to establish appropriate mechanisms for absorbing research findings; (b) research centres often thrive in relatively isolated environments; and (c) research results are sometimes inherently insufficiently clear to fuel public advocacy campaigns, at least in their initial presentation. But these challenges must be met, or the Centre risks marginalization and UNICEF risks losing opportunities. The assessment team suggested improved coordination between ICDC and New York divisions to facilitate these tasks.

15. Another aspect of the Centre's work, addressed by both the reviews and the International Advisory Committee, is the degree to which its work can be carried out independently in an atmosphere of academic freedom. While reinforcing the need for the Centre to work on issues more directly relevant to UNICEF concerns, the reviews have underlined the advantages to UNICEF of the special role of the Centre. They have recommended a reasonable space between the Centre and the rest of UNICEF which would allow the organization to learn from its own experience and to explore and speak on sensitive issues without compromising the ability of UNICEF to work with all partners. In 1995, a delegate to the Advisory Committee stated that while research should point to new directions and visions, it might be more important to examine critically existing development theories or practices, indicating where they might be leading in the wrong direction.

## C. Current work

16. During 1997–1999, while the Centre retained its two separate programme areas of exploring the implications of

the Convention on the Rights of the Child and of researching economic and social policies for children, the latter programme focused increasingly on these issues in a child rights context. Thus, all of the Centre's programme work is now developed with a child rights perspective.

## Rights of the Child

17. Over the past three years, UNICEF has moved to secure the Convention on the Rights of the Child as the basis for all of its work. ICDC has continued to contribute to this process by researching new areas which impact on the organization's ability to assist in implementing the Convention in a constantly evolving international climate. It has also worked closely with the Programme Group and the Division of Human Resources in the development of corporate guidelines and training materials; helped to strengthen the ability of partner organizations to work in new areas; and networked with child rights monitoring and information dissemination organizations such as Child Watch and the Child Rights Information Network, of which ICDC is a founding member. For example, the Centre has documented the information-gathering process and methodology used in one of the best alternative reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child in order to facilitate the process of preparing such reports by NGOs. In the last three years, the Centre has moved more decisively to actively transfer knowledge gained from its child rights research to UNICEF staff and partners through strengthened capacity-building activities as well as more targeted advocacy for the Convention.

18. A new series of *Innocenti Digests* and *Portfolios*, initiated in 1998, provide comprehensive information on implementation of the convention, including its monitoring mechanisms such as the work of children's ombudspersons. They also explore issues which UNICEF staff and many partners are now beginning to grapple with such as violence by children and against children, children in conflict with the law, international adoption, child domestic workers and the education of disabled children. These capacity-building products have been produced largely with support from the Government of Italy and with specific funding received from the Governments of Sweden and Luxembourg. Field offices and National Committees for UNICEF have translated many of the *Digests* into additional languages and have distributed them widely to policy makers, NGOs and community organizations.

19. Seminars and workshops organized by ICDC have brought UNICEF field staff and external experts to Florence for policy analysis and training in new or corporate priority issues. The results and conclusions have been disseminated through the Centre's publications as well as through electronic channels. Following an agreement with the United Nations Staff College in Turin in late 1997, ICDC produced a series of children's rights training modules in 1998 for Staff College courses designed to brief country teams and field coordinators, among others.

20. In June 1997, the Government of Sweden funded a major project, initiated by UNICEF in collaboration with Rädda Barnen, to foster and consolidate a culture of respect for children and their rights in Latin America. ICDC collaborated with the UNICEF Regional Office for the Americas and Caribbean, as well as with nine UNICEF Latin American country offices, to build child rights programming capacity, to ensure sound analysis of the application of key articles of the Convention, and to facilitate the analysis and dissemination of key information on law, policy and practice relating to the Convention. The Centre's contribution to this programme was focused on child labour and child participation. It also published books and materials on child labour and education and collaborated with the International Labour Organization (ILO) in a study on economic incentives to combat child labour and to reduce school drop-out and repetition rates. The programme has focused on strengthening the knowledge base among the programme participants and on fostering communication and experience interchange.

21. In the previous report to the Executive Board in 1996, the Executive Director noted four major substantive areas for the Centre's child rights research and capacity-building work: child labour; children in armed conflict; children and families of minorities and immigrants; and implementation and monitoring processes of the Convention. The work on child labour, partially described above, also includes exploration of the relationship between reducing or eliminating child labour and the expansion of relevant, affordable and accessible primary education. The Governments of Luxembourg and Sweden have supported case studies, research, experience exchanges and seminars. In collaboration with Programme Division and international experts, work has also been done on the development of child labour databases at the ILO Turin Centre. In 1999, ICDC hosted a meeting of World Bank, ILO and UNICEF staff in Florence to establish a common basis for collaboration in data collection on child labour.

22. Several ICDC initiatives have focused on psychosocial trauma rehabilitation for children trapped in armed conflicts — a study on Eritrea and Ethiopia is being followed by one on Bosnia and Herzegovina. The Centre has also studied rehabilitation efforts following the 1994 genocide in Rwanda, pointing to ways in which the Convention could have been more effectively applied in the post-conflict situation. As part of its role in analysing and documenting lessons learned, it has also recorded the experience of the first UNICEF child protection officer in Burundi and has drawn implications for future work in this area.

23. Research activities were also carried out on article 2 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, particularly on discrimination against minority children. These projects examined the situation of minority children in Latin America, North America and Europe, including the social, educational, legal and health service environment. They identified the obstacles to these children's full achievement of their rights and produced advocacy materials designed to raise awareness. A special emphasis has been on promoting a better understanding of how education can contribute to, or undermine, social cohesion in multi-ethnic societies. ICDC has worked to build a network of individuals and institutions interested in minority issues. UNICEF, the Tuscan regional government and the Italian National Committee for UNICEF will jointly organize a major international conference on non-discrimination in Florence in December 1999 marking the Convention's tenth anniversary.

24. During the 1997–1999 period, ICDC worked on other issues relating to the right to education for all children — such as education quality, the relationship between education and child labour, and education in countries undergoing economic transition; the 1998 MONEE report was devoted to this last subject. An Innocenti Lecture on education, also published by ICDC under the title "A School for Children with Rights", proved to be one of the most sought after ICDC publications and has been translated into several languages by field offices and National Committees. The 1998 (Ninth) Innocenti Global Seminar on the subject of basic education was oriented towards policy development and capacity-building.

## Economic and social policies for children

25. The Centre continued to build on its earlier work on the economic dimensions of decentralization as it affects children and low-income families largely through the MONEE project (with studies completed of the Russian Federation and Uzbekistan, and substantial treatment in the regionwide work on education). In addition, a major survey paper analysing the impact of decentralization on children was widely circulated. Other work focused in particular on public policies and social conditions in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, and on child well-being in industrialized countries. Work in the first of these areas has been conducted through the MONEE project, which has become a flagship activity of ICDC, gaining a great deal of attention in the countries concerned as well as from research centres and NGOs outside the region and from other international organizations. The latter include EBRD, which has drawn on the project's work regularly in its influential annual *Transition Report*, and, in particular, the World Bank, which quotes its findings extensively and has also made a substantial financial contribution each year during 1996–1999 to the project's funding.

26. The MONEE project was an early demonstration of the commitment of UNICEF to the countries in transition and typifies the Centre's role as a knowledge base. The establishment of the Regional Office for Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States in 1996 gave the project heightened importance within UNICEF, with associated obligations of increased coordination with the rest of the organization. The period since 1996 has seen fruitful collaboration with both the Regional Office and a number of country offices which use the reports to advocate for change and appropriate policy and programme formulation in the countries concerned. The project now covers all 27 transition countries of the region. It updates welfare trends for children and focuses on a special theme each year. The six reports published during 1993–1999 provide a unique series of studies on the social consequences and opportunities in the unfolding transition. The 1997 and 1998 reports ("Children at Risk" and "Education for All") were launched with extensive media coverage, with the assistance of the German National Committee. The Executive Director will launch the current report on the position of women in the transition to mark the twentieth anniversary of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The MONEE project now also produces a public-use database, TransMONEE, which has been widely distributed via the worldwide web. The World Bank has said that TransMONEE has proved essential in monitoring progress in the region and guiding project development.

27. The Centre's work on child well-being in the industrialized countries of the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development helps to strengthen the role

of UNICEF as a children's advocate in countries at higher levels of development. In 1997, Oxford University Press published the ICDC book *Child Poverty and Deprivation in the Industrialized Countries, 1945–1995*, which provided a 50-year perspective. Subsequent work during 1997–1999 has focused on two studies, both almost now completed. A cross-national study of the movements of children in and out of poverty places the Centre at the forefront of analysis of the dynamics of childhood deprivation in the industrialized world. In addition, a project on the "European Monetary Union and Children" continues the UNICEF tradition established in the work on structural adjustment with a human face of focusing on the impact of macroeconomic policies on children. It draws attention to the fact that the introduction of the European Union single currency is a policy shift of enormous implications for the economics of Member States, and it is essential that the potential impact on children must be considered. The project has also considered whether European countries are becoming increasingly similar in terms of the well-being of their children. Data collection and analysis in the different dimensions of child welfare is an important step towards the greater visibility for children in Europe called for by UNICEF in its collaboration with the Council of Europe.

### Communication and documentation

28. The Centre has been slow to take advantage of communication opportunities and to extend the outreach of its research. The primary objective of research for an action-oriented agency should be to influence the development of appropriate policies — in this case for children and women — and to influence the allocation of adequate resources for them. Politicians and policy and decision makers seldom read research papers and are often fairly removed from the world of researchers. They obtain their information on current developments and thinking mainly through other channels, including policy briefings and the media. As mentioned earlier, research does not always readily lend itself to media coverage. In 1998, several major steps were taken to address this issue: a Web site (http://www.unicef-icdc.org) was established, and the Centre's communication programme was reviewed extensively. This was followed in 1999 by a review of the Centre's publication programme, including distribution and outreach; some changes are already in place. Work in communication has been redefined, and the section will be strengthened in the next triennium. In 1997–1999, more than 50 publications were produced, including five books. A co-publishing arrangement was also set up with the Tuscan regional government to translate selected ICDC publications into Italian, while summaries of the MONEE report were published in several languages.

## III. The future programme of the International Child Development Centre

### A. Current climate

29. The Centre's proposed programme for the next three years is set against a background of increasing complexity in which the pace of global change continues to accelerate annually. Many more people are leading more fulfilling lives: for example, dramatic progress has been made in life expectancy, in infant mortality reduction and in school enrolment in developing countries. But the gap between the rich and the poor is also widening rapidly, leaving the unskilled, particularly women and children, the worst off in many parts of the world, including in many countries of Eastern Europe and in the former Soviet Union, in Asia and, most of all, in sub-Saharan Africa, where the downward slide has been accelerated by the impact of HIV/AIDS. In its 1999 annual report, the World Bank notes that last year, many developing countries did not "develop". In this international context, UNICEF work will also be increasingly complex as it works to promote the human rights of children in societies facing serious economic and social constraints and tensions. It will need to deepen its knowledge base in both the wider issues of poverty, globalization and economic and social policies which set the context for the delivery of development assistance as well as its technical competence in its own programme areas. This will require an enhanced ability to learn from its own vast experience as well as to work with an increasing number of new actors in very diverse situations.

### B. Future direction

30. As stated earlier, the 1993 assessment team determined that UNICEF needed to become more reflective and probing and that its research culture needed to be strengthened. This was reinforced by the 1994 management study which also noted the continued intellectual leadership and authority of UNICEF would rest on its ability to develop a stronger knowledge base in new areas. The organization has committed itself to strengthening its leadership role for children. In order to do this, it will have to invest more

efforts in research. ICDC, as the only part of UNICEF with a global mandate devoted exclusively to research and capacity-building, will help to generate synergy and promote a culture of research, learning and reflection within the organization. It will also contribute to the strengthening of child rights research in developing countries, for example, by working more closely with research institutions and networks such as Child Watch and the new Global Development Network.

31. The 1995 ICDC Advisory Committee, which discussed the criteria for the Centre's work, agreed that it should: (a) research the "frontiers" of UNICEF activities in new areas likely to be a high priority in the medium term; (b) review controversial topics and statistics requiring academic freedom; and (c) provide input into selected current high priority areas for UNICEF, thus retaining its immediate relevance to the organization. These criteria were endorsed by the Executive Board in 1996.

32. An internal UNICEF Executive Directive (CF/EXD/1997–3), issued following Executive Board approval of the current ICDC programme, articulated further the role and functions of the Centre which remain valid for the future. It establishes ICDC as a principal information centre on children's rights with key knowledge generation and capacity-building functions within the organization. The Centre is expected to create and support "knowledge bases" in a number of ways, including through research, the collection and analyses of best practices and "lessons learned", policy studies and case materials. Its research activities should be focused on implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and should promote understanding, development and monitoring of children's rights, with special attention to issues of economic affordability and on the need to study innovative methodologies for socio-economic policy analysis related to children's rights. Research results will be synthesized into key findings and fed into the formulation of UNICEF policy. Work on crucial and controversial issues will be continued as the Centre explores front-line and politically sensitive issues before a more formal involvement of UNICEF would be considered.

33. The Executive Directive also states that an important component of the Centre's work is to translate the results of research, information management and knowledge generation into capacity-building programmes. The emphasis will be on issues that UNICEF staff face in the context of the mandate inspired by the Convention and also on certain relatively long-standing activities, where responses are based on approaches that have entered the realm of conventional wisdom, but where readjustments could be fruitful.

34. In line with the above, the Centre's future training activities will be rationalized to focus more on knowledge generation and on smaller seminars and workshops designed to bring together external experts with relevant UNICEF staff to share knowledge and examine approaches. The information generated will be subsequently shared with UNICEF staff through the *Innocenti Digest* series and through inputs into training modules produced by UNICEF and its partner organizations. The *Digests* have already proved to be successful as "road maps" to new issues and areas by providing comprehensive information on international standards, best practices, existing literature and lists of resource people. In cooperation with other offices, case studies of UNICEF country programme cooperation strategies and experiences in supporting human rights-based approaches at national and subnational levels will also be developed. The Centre's North/South perspective is also useful here since the development cooperation programmes of many donors now have a child rights framework, and a sharing of experiences would be helpful. Lessons learned from this exercise and policy briefs on selected issues will be available to both UNICEF and its partner organizations.

## C. Proposed activities

35. The future work of UNICEF is guided by the "Medium-term plan for the period 1998–2001 (E/ICEF/1998/13 and Corr.1), "The future global agenda for children — imperatives for the twenty-first century (E/ICEF/1999/10) and the UNICEF approach to "Programme cooperation for children and women from a human rights perspective" (E/ICEF/1999/11). These documents reaffirm the universality of rights established by the two Conventions, arguing that development programmes must address both the causes and effects of the denial of rights, including the processes which perpetuate inequality, discrimination and exploitation. UNICEF will be required to provide leadership in assisting countries to examine public sector policies and practices to ensure that all children have access to services. It also needs to assist in developing better quantitative and qualitative indicators, thus ensuring appropriate interventions. The Centre's economic and social policy programme and its work on implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child and child protection have all contributed to shaping this vision and agenda. The Centre's future programme will also be set within this framework. It will focus on helping UNICEF to fill the gaps in the organization's current knowledge in the three priority outcomes for children identified in document E/ICEF/1999/10, while at the same time exploring and

examining new issues that are not yet foreseen as UNICEF priorities. In particular, ICDC will build on its existing work in the areas of juvenile justice and child labour to include other issues which directly affect adolescents, thus contributing significantly to the new work of UNICEF with this important age group.

36. The Centre's socio-economic research and policy analysis activities, which in the past few years have focused mainly on poor children in industrialized countries and in transition economies, will be supplemented by more specific work on poverty reduction and economic and social transition in developing countries. A number of new initiatives are being developed to build on and extend the Centre's MONEE experience to other regions. A paper describing the MONEE methodology and lessons is being completed for publication. With earmarked funding from the Government of Italy, the Centre is working with the UNICEF Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region on the "Children in the Mediterranean" project. Work in the East Asia and Pacific region, carried out in collaboration with UNICEF field offices in Indonesia and Mongolia, will repeat the MONEE pattern by exploiting existing data sources to make the needs of children and women more visible in public debate, and by providing in-depth analyses of subjects of special concern. The work on Indonesia, funded partly by the Australian Committee for UNICEF, will contribute to strengthened national capacity to monitor the situation of children and women, and will attempt to cooperate with, and obtain leverage through, the World Bank (as with the MONEE project). Other economic and social policy work will be carried out in Africa when two posts currently vacant in the Centre are filled. For example, research will be carried out on the economic impact of the HIV/AIDS pandemic in developing countries, particularly in Africa.

37. As with the MONEE project, the Centre's research in both developing and industrialized countries enriches the overall programme action perspective. In addition, it allows UNICEF to develop more broad-based advocacy that is likely to yield better results, particularly in sensitive areas. Two such areas on which the Centre will produce *Innocenti Digests* are violence against women, and child trafficking and sexual exploitation. Work on violence against women was begun in 1998/99, with support for a UNICEF project on South Asia. The 1999 MONEE report on women also examines the issue for the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States region as will the forthcoming work in the MENA region.

38. In the richer industrialized countries, the research in this three-year cycle will expand beyond a principal economic focus to include other child rights issues. ICDC will launch an innovative series of reports on children in industrialized countries in late 1999 or early 2000. Funded by National Committees for UNICEF, which will use the reports to advocate for the rights of marginalized and disadvantaged children, each report will cover one subject where comparable data are available. Issues will include child poverty, education, health, accidents and injuries, suicide, teenage pregnancy, sexual health and smoking. Each report will include an explicit link in the analysis to the organization's treatment of the subject in developing countries, thus introducing a North/South perspective.

39. The MONEE project on Central and Eastern Europe, CIS and the Baltic States region will also continue. The year 2000 MONEE report will focus on adolescents and young people. It is expected to contribute to the knowledge base not only of the countries under review, but also to the overall approach of UNICEF on issues concerning this age group.

40. With its past record and experience on child labour, ICDC will continue to assist in gathering data and experience in this critical area. The issue is being addressed in the programme on child rights in Latin America funded by the Swedish International Development Authority and will also be examined in the new projects in the MENA and East Asia and Pacific regions. The impact of the crisis on schooling in Indonesia, for example, has been a major concern. A paper is currently being prepared that analyses the links between child labour and learning achievement in Ghana; much of the existing research on the child labour-education link considers only the impact of child labour on school enrolment or on attendance at schools rather than on what children actually manage to learn.

41. The Centre will also resume its earlier work on researching aspects of the Convention on the Rights of the Child that are still subject to misinformation and common misunderstandings. For example, the Centre will research one of the fundamental principles of the Convention: the evolving capacities of the child. Although it underpins all implementation of the Convention, this article was not designated as a fundamental principle of the treaty by the Committee on the Rights of the Child, and has been largely overlooked in its elaboration. In an instrument which in most cases grants the same rights to newborn babies as to 17-year-olds, it is essential to determine both the direct role of children at different stages in their lives, and conversely of parents or others in positions of responsibility. The lack of this clarification has so far resulted in confusion and opposition to the Convention through the dissemination of

misinformation by groups in many countries which feel that its implementation impinges upon parental rights. The study will complement major work currently being carried out on child participation by the Division of Evaluation, Policy and Planning in New York. In addition, the Centre intends to conduct an overview of the impact of the Convention, to be released in conjunction with its tenth anniversary in 2000.

42. A review of the collaboration with the *Istituto degli Innocenti* will be undertaken this year, leading to a more meaningful joint programme. The location of the National Centre for Documentation in the *Istituto* will facilitate this process. Programme areas under discussion with the *Istituto* and with the Italian National Committee for UNICEF include work on the Child-Friendly Cities initiative, which builds on important experience gained by the Centre on the urban child. Other projects being discussed include new work on minorities and on migrant children.

## D. Communication

43. High priority is being given to improve the Centre's ability to disseminate its research results not only to academic policy makers, but also to the wider public. Advocacy strategies will be built into the planning for each programme and will be carried out in careful coordination with the Division of Communication (DOC). These will be designed to give maximum relevant visibility to the products and services that result from ICDC research, including in both developing and industrialized countries; and the needs of the host country, Italy, must also be kept in mind. In collaboration with the Regional Office for Europe in Geneva, closer links will be established with the National Committees for UNICEF to improve their access to information which they can more easily use in their communication programmes. The review of publications undertaken by the Centre, with the support of DOC, is likely to lead to some fundamental changes in the publications programme, with fewer publications and a greater concentration on targeted outreach and co-publishing. An improved Web site is a priority, and work with the electronic media has been initiated. As a first step, a development and human rights NGO, Television Trust for the Environment, will produce and distribute films on three current and future issues to be covered in the MONEE reports. Better targeting will also result in more language versions of ICDC materials.

## E. Financing and staffing

44. As mentioned earlier, the strengthening of the position of UNICEF as a leader for children will involve the development of a much stronger knowledge base. ICDC, as the organization's principal information centre, will play an important role in this process. The Government of Italy provides a core annual contribution for the work of the Centre. While the value of this contribution, which has been maintained at the same level since 1988, has declined in real terms, it continues to cover the Centre's operational costs and much of its programme work. For the next three-year cycle, the Government of Italy has pledged to continue to provide 10.5 billion lire (approximately $6 million) to support the programme and operational costs of the Centre. In order to further develop programme cooperation between ICDC and the *Istituto degli Innocenti*, as well as to cover related costs, the Government of Italy has also pledged to provide UNICEF with further financial support within available resources.

45. An expansion of the Centre's financial base with contributions for specific projects is needed. At present, the Governments of Sweden and Luxemburg and the World Bank provide additional financing for specific projects. In 1999, the Australian National Committee has agreed to make a contribution for a specific project, and other National Committees have expressed interest in funding projects such as the reports on industrialized countries. The Government of Italy also contributes to some specific projects such as the work on the Mediterranean countries which the Centre will begin shortly. UNICEF programme funds in New York or field offices also provide support according to the formula approved by the Executive Board in its decision 1994/R.2/10 providing: "that general resources be used by the Centre only for specific Board-approved actions and where other UNICEF offices request the Centre to undertake certain aspects of these actions on their behalf". The Centre will need to be more proactive in obtaining funds from new sources, including foundations and academic institutions. An improvement in the Centre's networking with such institutions could lead to joint financing of projects or grants for research.

46. The Centre has a relatively small regular staff, expected to total 20 in all categories by early 2000. A large proportion are General Service staff needed to maintain the operational work of the Centre. The very small Professional staff is complemented by the flexible use of temporary assistance, interns and Junior Professional Officers, as well as cooperative arrangements, including secondments, with other parts of UNICEF and other institutions.

## F. Draft recommendation

47. The Executive Director *recommends* that the Executive Board adopt the following draft recommendation:

*The Executive Board,*

*Having reviewed* the report on the "International Child Development Centre: progress report and proposed activities for 2000-2002" (E/ICEF/1999/16),

*Authorizes* a three-year extension for the Centre for the period 2000-2002 with a total allocation of $12.8 million in supplementary funding, of which the Government of Italy has pledged to provide a minimum of 10.5 billion lire (approximately $6 million) for the Centre's core activities, with the remainder to be sought from other donors for specific activities.

# Annex

## Estimated breakdown of expenditures, 2000–2002[a]

(In thousands of United States dollars)

| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| ***Programme costs*** | | | | |
| Research, policy analysis, capacity-building, programme coordination, workshops, publications and knowledge development in programme areas | 2550 | 2700 | 2800 | 8050 |
| Communications, publications, website and documentation | 550 | 600 | 650 | 1800 |
| Exploration activities in new areas | 300 | 350 | 350 | 1000 |
| *Subtotal* | *3400* | *3650* | *3800* | *10850* |
| ***Programme support costs*** | | | | |
| Support staff costs | 305 | 335 | 365 | 1005 |
| General operating costs (communications, supplies, maintenance, equipment) | 295 | 315 | 335 | 945 |
| *Subtotal* | *600* | *650* | *700* | *1950* |
| **Total** | **4000** | **4300** | **4500** | **12800** [b] |

[a] In the past programme cycles, the contribution of the Government of Italy was 10.5 billion lire. A higher contribution is expected for the new cycle. The remainder will be sought from other sources.

[b] Since the administrative costs of ICDC are borne by supplementary funds and are not covered by UNICEF programme support, and management and administration budget, a cost recovery of 1 per cent will be charged for contributions to ICDC.